

VZCZCXRO0960

OO RUEHAO RUEHCD RUEHGA RUEHGD RUEHHA RUEHHO RUEHMC RUEHMT RUEHNG
RUEHNL RUEHQU RUEHRD RUEHRG RUEHRS RUEHTM RUEHVC
DE RUEHTG #0901 2520030
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 090030Z SEP 09
FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0628
INFO RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS IMMEDIATE
RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA IMMEDIATE 0297
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/THE WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE 1194
RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE
RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL//CINC/POLAD// IMMEDIATE
RUEAHND/CDRJTFB SOTO CANO HO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 000901

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/08/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: TFH01: AMBASSADOR MEETS WITH NATIONAL PARTY FIGURES

Classified By: Ambassador Hugo Llorens, reasons 1.4 (b & d)

¶1. (C) Ambassador and DCM met with former Honduran president and National Party leader Rafael Callejas and Honduran business mogul and National Party financier Miguel Facusse for lunch September 7 to press for their support to pressure the Micheletti regime to accept the San Jose Accord. Callejas said that the party, and its presidential candidate Porfirio "Pepe" Lobo, had accepted that President Manuel "Mel" Zelaya would have to be allowed back in the country in order to end the political crisis. However, the party wanted this to happen one month before the election, to coincide with the constitutionally-mandated date when control of the military passes from the president to the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE). Callejas admitted that it was in his party's favor to have the return as late as possible, as an early return of Zelaya opened the possibility of a mending of the Liberal Party, a much weaker opponent to the Nationals since the coup split the party apart.

¶2. (C) The Ambassador explained that the U.S. had run out of patience with the de facto regime's failure to negotiate and would continue to seek strong measures (such as our closure of the visas section and cessation of aid) to pressure the regime. He emphasized the statement by the Department that in the absence of the San Jose framework we would not be able to recognize the November elections. The Ambassador asked for Callejas and Facusse's advice on how to pressure de facto regime head Roberto Micheletti to accept the accord, noting that Micheletti appeared isolated and that it was not clear to whom he listened. Callejas said that a key figure was Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez and urged the Ambassador to engage with him. Both Callejas and Facusse said that they had influence with Micheletti and would meet with him separately (Callejas said he would do so on September 13, when he returned from a trip abroad).

¶3. (C) Facusse reported that he had attended a recent Business Council of Latin America (CEAL) meeting in El Salvador where business leaders with connections to Micheletti reported that Micheletti was now willing to consider the return of Zelaya after the November 29 election date but before the January 27 handover of power.

¶4. (C) Comment: Callejas had his U.S. visa revoked in 2006 following corruption charges; this was his first meeting with the Ambassador. Despite his past, Callejas remains a powerful figure within the National Party. In addition, he

is president of the Honduras national football team, an important position in this soccer-fanatic nation. Facusse is the wealthiest, most powerful businessman in the country, and also a strong supporter of the San Jose Accord. The National's support of a return of Zelaya one month prior to the election is self-serving; it would be too late to give the Liberals a chance to reunite, but early enough so that the elections would (in their view) be seen legitimate by the international community. That the party and Lobo are willing to consider the return of Zelaya before the election is a sign our message, that the elections will not be accepted by the international community without an agreement, is getting traction. The Cardinal is a powerful voice and could be helpful in moving Micheletti. After a dinner with the Ambassador in July, he agreed to push for acceptance of the accord, but then, after the intervention of de facto regime commissioner Mauricio Villeda (a member of Opus Dei), the cardinal reversed himself and publicly supported the regime. We will approach him again to seek his support. While the return of Zelaya after the elections would not be acceptable to us, if Micheletti is considering such a plan, it is a sign he is beginning to feel the pressure.

LLORENS